

Appl. No. 10/687,384 **BEST AVAILABLE COPY** Attorney Docket No. 10541-1868

II. Remarks

Reconsideration and re-examination of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is herein respectfully requested. Claims 1-26 remain pending.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §112

Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

As denoted at the end of paragraph [0019] and the beginning of paragraph [0022], the controller 50 monitors the motor current. As one of ordinary skill in the art would readily understand from the specification and drawings, the controller senses the current draw of the motor, for example, in Figure 2 from sensors in the road wheel actuation subsystem 16 along line 64. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 7-10 and 21-24 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Accordingly, claims 7 and 21 have been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Further, claims 8-10 and claims 22-24 depend from claim 7 or claim 21 and are, therefore, patentable for at least the same reasons as claims 7 and 21.

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BEST AVAILABLE COPY Attorney Docket No. 10541-1868*Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102(b)*

Claims 1-3, 15-17, 25 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,220,385 to Bohner et al. (Bohner).

Claim 1 has been amended to recite "a clutch adapted to couple the steering shaft with the road wheel based on an end of travel condition." The examiner notes that the clutch 6 in Bohner may couple the steering shaft of the road wheel (c 5, ln. 7-11) when the road wheel is at an end of travel position, as well as any inclusive position. More specifically, Bohner teaches engaging the clutch if the safety of the steering system can no longer be ensured with certainty. (c 5, ln. 3-4). The example given is when there is an unexpected drop in the hydraulic pressure of the system that controls wheel movement. However, Bohner does not teach or suggest engaging the clutch based on an end of travel condition. Therefore, Bohner does not teach or suggest the present invention.

Similarly, claim 15, as amended, recites "coupling the steering mechanism to the road wheel mechanically based on the step of sensing that the road wheel angle is at an end of travel position." As described above, Bohner does not teach or suggest engaging the clutch based on the road wheel being at an end of travel position. Therefore, Bohner does not teach or suggest the present invention as provided in claim 15.

Claims 2, 3, 16, 17, 25 and 26 depend from claims 1 or 15 and are, therefore, patentable for at least the same reasons as given above in support of claims 1 and 15.

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Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 4 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bohner '385 in view of U.S. Patent 5,347,458 to Serizawa et al. (Serizawa).

Claims 4 and 18 depend from claims 1 and 15, respectively. Therefore, claims 4 and 18 are patentable for at least the same reasons as given above in support of claims 1 and 15.

Claims 5, 6, 12, 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bohner '385 in view of U.S. Patent 6,681,881 to Andonian et al. (Andonian).

The examiner relies on Andonian to reject claims 5, 6, 12, 19, and 20. Applicants respectfully submit that Andonian was assigned or under the obligation to be assigned to Visteon Global Technologies, Inc., the assignee of the instant application (recorded at Reel 014626, Frame 0120), at the time of invention. Therefore, Andonian is unavailable to limit the patentability of claims 5, 6, 12, 19, and 20 as defined by 35 U.S.C. §103(c). Accordingly, applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 5, 6, 12, 19, and 20.

Claims 11 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bohner '385 in view of U.S. Patent 6,219,604 to Dilger et al. (Dilger).

Claims 11 and 13 depend from claim 1 and are, therefore, patentable for at least the same reasons as given above in support of claim 1.

Claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bohner '385 in view of Dilger '604 and further in view of Serizawa '458.

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Claim 14 depends from claim 1 and is, therefore, patentable for at least the same reasons given above in support of claim 1.

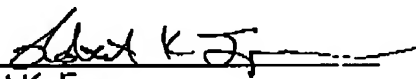
Accordingly, applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present form of the claims are patentably distinguishable over the art of record and that this application is now in condition for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted by,

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